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## Walter Rauschenbusch's Rochester

BY BLAKE MCKELVEY

Walter Rauschenbusch was one of the few Rochesterians who have gained mention in general histories of the United States. He shared this distinction with Susan B. Anthony, Frederick Douglass, George Eastman, and perhaps one or two others, each of whom gave creative leadership to a broadly national development. They all, not even excepting Eastman, exerted their major influence outside of Rochester, yet they received in turn both inspiration and support from the city and may be regarded as representatives of important movements within this community.

Thus the religious stirrings in Rochester around the turn of the century both influenced and reflected the career of Walter Rauschenbusch. They were, however, parts of a broader movement resulting from the impact of urban conditions on Protestant thought and activity during the last decades of the nineteenth century and the early years of the twentieth—a movement which reached Rochester in due season from the larger cities of its birth.

Thus it should be noted at the start that while Rauschenbusch was born in Rochester in 1861 and received the major part of his formal education here—in the public schools, at the University of Rochester, and the Rochester Theological Seminary—he developed his first active interest in social problems when preaching in New York City. It was in his first year there, 1886, that he met and became a devoted supporter of Henry George whose campaign for mayor introduced Rauschenbusch to many challenging social problems, zealous reformers

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and provocative writers. During his eleven years as pastor of a small German Baptist church in the tenement district, young Rauschenbusch came to grips with some of these problems. Even during several trips abroad he found himself, in the slums of London and on the Continent, troubled by the apparent indifference of the church to the social conditions under which so many people lived. An increasing literature of protest, notably the books of George and Bellamy, Tolstoy and Mazzini, helped to broaden and deepen his thought, and with a few kindred Baptists, Rauschenbusch founded, in 1892, a small religious fellowship known as the Brotherhood of the Kingdom. His own dynamic conception of the Kingdom of God as a socially interdependent society, which awaited only the will and intelligence of Christians for its realization, was fully formulated by Rauschenbusch before his return to Rochester in 1897, yet most of the writing and teaching on which his reputation is based came after that date and reflected in several respects his experiences here.

Walter Rauschenbusch was not, of course, recognized as a prophet when he returned to Rochester in the fall of 1897. He came back as the scholarly son of Dr. Augustus Rauschenbusch, founder, several decades before, of the German Baptist Department of the Rochester Theological Seminary. His post was a humble one at the start and like many new appointees he was expected to fill a wide schedule, teaching New Testament interpretation, natural science, civil government, and English; his fluent mastery of German, learned at home and during trips abroad, was a major advantage in this German-speaking department. There was no hint in this assignment of his interest in social Christianity, and even after his real talents as a teacher and a scholar had won him a promotion to the regular faculty of the Rochester Theological Seminary in 1902, it was as Professor of Church History that he was appointed. Dr. Augustus Hopkins Strong, whose son Charles had married a daughter of John D. Rockefeller, was president of the Seminary and must have known Rauschenbusch well before assuring him that church history included "not merely the doings of an organization but the history of the Kingdom of God on earth. . . ." \* He had judged his man well, for few if any critics of the social order or of theological traditions were able to speak as

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\* D. R. Sharpe, *Walter Rauschenbusch*, page 156, quoting Rauschenbusch's report on his conference with Dr. Strong on September 6, 1902.

impersonally or with as much kindly charity towards opponents as Walter Rauschenbusch. And, like his schoolboy chum, Edward J. Hanna, who was now likewise back in Rochester, as Professor of Dogmatic Theology at St. Bernard's Seminary, few spokesmen for a liberal theology were better able to phrase their ideas in forms both acceptable and challenging to their conservative associates.

### Religious Stirrings in Rochester

If Rochester failed to recognize Rauschenbusch as a prophet in these early years, it was not only because of the moderation of his public statements and the historical scholarship in which he was partly absorbed, but also because of the prominence of several more dramatic prophets of the new day who were already on the scene. Indeed, the religious life of Rochester was kept in a state of constant turmoil for several decades by a succession of dynamic personalities. Perhaps it would be more accurate to say that the city's growing social problems and its reactions to the evolutionary doctrine and to the concepts of social Christianity which reached it from outside found expression in a succession of pastors beginning with the Reverend Newton M. Mann, defender of evolution in the 1870's, and culminating with the Reverend Paul Moore Strayer, close associate of Rauschenbusch at the end of the period. The new professor of church history may, as he later recalled, have had six scholarly tomes in mind when he accepted his post in 1902, but Rochester was no site for a cloistered retreat in these years, particularly not for a man already keenly interested in social Christianity.

By far the most explosive center of religious thought in Rochester during the 1890's was Plymouth Church. There the Reverend Myron Adams, disfellowshipped by the Rochester Presbytery in 1880 for doubting the doctrine of endless damnation, continued his ministry to a faithful flock of independents, who now styled themselves Congregationalists. The thoughtful and inquiring sermons of Myron Adams had assumed an increasingly humanistic character as the years advanced, suggestive of the doctrines of the Free Religious Association of the Reverend O. B. Frothingham in New England. The Reverend William F. Kettle, who succeeded Adams after his death late in 1895, continued this trend and developed such a strong emphasis on the message of religion to the working man that he resigned late in 1898 to enter the labor movement.

But if Adams and Kettle had expressed sympathy for the working man, it was as nothing compared to the indictment of the contemporary economic and social systems voiced by their successor, the Reverend William T. Brown. This vigorous young zealot sounded a clarion call for the spirit of brotherhood in industry, declaring that Christianity would fail the modern world unless its leaders moved forward from the old doctrine of personal salvation to a recognition of the higher goals of social unity and social salvation. Indeed Plymouth Church, under his leadership, was converted into a people's club house. Billiard and pool tables were installed in the former Sunday School rooms; a men's club known as "The Pilgrims" was organized to operate the building during week days when dancing and other entertainments were scheduled. Lectures on social problems alternated with musicals to displace even the Sabbath morning worship, as Brown declared that his purpose was not to *save* but to *make* men. A weekly paper, *HERE AND NOW*, reflected the urgency of this movement, which enlisted much support for several years.

Walter Rauschenbusch was keenly interested in this local experiment in social Christianity. It bore a striking resemblance to people's church movements in several other cities, notably that of the Reverend W. P. Bliss in Boston and the Reverend Washington Gladden in Columbus, Ohio. Rauschenbusch took part, along with such distinguished visitors as Henry Demarest Lloyd, Professor Richard T. Ely and "Golden Rule" Jones of Toledo, in the lecture series scheduled at Plymouth Church by Brown and his sympathetic trustee, J. Warrant Castleman. Philip Jackson, the leading Rochester Socialist, Robert Mathews, disciple of Spencer, Joseph B. Bloss, George P. Decker and Dr. George Goler, always independent in spirit, were other frequent speakers. Discord between some of the older and the newer members was surmounted in time, but the church could not survive the declining interest which became apparent after the second year. This first effort to reach the great mass of laboring men proved unsuccessful, and finally, in May 1902, Brown resigned to enter the labor movement and become a Socialist organizer in New England.

If the successive pastors of Plymouth Church posed the issues with which Rauschenbusch was concerned in their most acute form, there were others in Rochester who approached them more cautiously and in the end with somewhat greater success. There were in fact several more practical if less spectacular methods of bringing the laboring

poor into the churches and ministering there to their human as well as their spiritual needs. Assistant pastors, mission workers and deaconesses, all dedicated to this cause, had appeared in several Rochester churches. The Reverend James H. Dennis of St. James Episcopal Church was in the eighties the first in Rochester, following many precedents in other cities, to organize and shelter at the parish house a club for poor boys in the neighborhood. Dennis served also for many years as president of the Humane Society and started the campaign in Rochester for a separate court room and more humane procedures for the trial and treatment of juvenile offenders. He frequently intervened to protect children and animals and on at least one occasion personally took the severe lashing an irate driver intended for his horse. During the depression of 1893 he took the lead in establishing the city's first provident loan society, the Mont de Piété, patterned after a society he had visited in Paris and designed to safeguard poverty stricken borrowers from loan sharks.

Although most of these activities were conducted outside his church, the Christ-like character of the Reverend Dennis was always evident, and many mourned when in 1901 he retired and left the city after twenty-five years of service. Fortunately his humanitarian mantle had already been assumed by Dr. William C. Gannett of the Unitarian Church. Dr. Gannett had in fact taken steps, immediately on his arrival in 1889, to establish a Boys Evening Home for newsboys and other urchins. The venture quickly proved a success as some two hundred boys gathered into the parish house on two (sometimes four) evenings a week. Classes in history, geography, writing, literature and manual training were conducted by volunteer teachers and the evenings usually ended in a recreational period under the supervision of officers elected by the boys. As their selections of courses expanded they not only took up journalism but brought out a paper of their own, *The Boys Evening Home Journal*, nurturing among its compositors a future editor of *The Democrat and Chronicle* and a future Rochester Congressman. The church was soon challenged to expand the facilities of its parish house, which was considerably enlarged in 1910 and rechristened Gannett House in honor to the beloved pastor who had retired two years before.

Several other practical efforts to reach poor boys occurred during the nineties though only one achieved much success. The First Baptist

Church started an evening school for newsboys in 1892 but abandoned it after two years. Second Baptist equipped a room with gymnastic devices at about the same time but failed for some reason to get its projected Boys Brigade in operation. First Presbyterian established a branch of the Boys Evening Home in its Sunday School rooms in 1898, but it likewise soon disappeared. Perhaps the opening of Brick Church Institute that year supplied all the facilities of this sort needed on the west side. In any event the classes offered there, in manual training, cooking, music and art, attracted a group of interested youngsters who numbered over 450 during the first year. The Reverend William R. Taylor, pastor of Brick Church, was a brother of Graham Taylor, one of the pioneers in the institutional church movement whose successful venture at Hartford may have supplied a model to Brick, though other models were available, too. Where the inspiration came from is less important than the success which greeted the Brick Church effort, and soon a full-time assistant was engaged by Dr. Taylor to supervise the volunteer teachers, some of them college boys. A new building was planned and erected in 1910 to house Brick Church Institute, long the most efficiently equipped institutional church in Rochester.

While Professor Rauschenbusch had no direct part in these developments, his cooperation was ready when in 1899 Taylor organized a public lecture series for adults at Brick Church, featuring distinguished speakers, notably Edwin Markham, the poet. Indeed there was a strong spirit of cooperation evident among the ministers and laymen interested in social Christianity. Thus it was from this group that the Labor Lyceum chose sponsors to ward off criticism in its early years, and the same names appear as leaders in many other liberal ventures, such as the Economics Club active during this period.

The Labor Lyceum started in December 1896 as a Sunday afternoon discussion group devoted to questions of interest to working people. It met at first in various union halls, but moved in 1898 into the council room in the City Hall. The advisory committee that year included the names of liberal pastors, such as Dennis and Gannett, and liberal professors such as Rauschenbusch and Herman LeRoy Fairchild. William T. Brown joined the committee a year later, together with Mrs. Mable Kennon, suffragist. Philip Jackson, Gad Martindale, William Lippelt and Richard Kitchelt were among the more active labor representatives. The scheduled topics ranged from God and the Bible (as viewed by complete agnostics such as Jackson and devout

believers such as the Reverend William R. Taylor) through temperance, peace, socialism and the class struggle to anarchy itself.

Among the local and visiting speakers who addressed these weekly assemblies was Walter Rauschenbusch whose readiness to engage in the spirited discussions which always followed the lecture assured repeated hearings. As doctrinaire socialists proved the most faithful attendants, they quickly dominated the discussions, but Rauschenbusch made several earnest efforts to point out the mistakes he saw in their materialistic, so-called scientific, beliefs. Their objectives were near his heart, he declared on one occasion in 1901, but he could not endorse or condone their impatience with practical reforms. He likened their faith in revolution to the hopes of certain Christians, called Millenarians, who expected the heavens to open one fine day and usher in the millenium. He struck straight from the shoulder when he told them frankly that the dogmatic spirit manifest in their discussions tended, in his view, to corrode the very soul of socialism. He could have had little hope, after the first few visits, of winning these confirmed Marxists to Christian Socialism, but he did not, like Brown, give up the effort. Moreover, the challenge the Lyceum's attitude presented must have played a part in diverting Rauschenbusch from historical scholarship and focusing his mind on the thoughts which ultimately gained expression in his great book, *Christianity and The Social Crisis*.

While the leading proponents of social Christianity were meeting with intellectuals in the labor movement in discussion programs, they were endeavoring at the same time to breach the denominational barriers which separated the churches. The enthusiasm engendered by the Parliament of Religions at the World's Fair in Chicago in 1893 had stimulated several national moves in this direction, one of which, the Brotherhood of Christian Unity, organized a local branch at Rochester in 1895. Several of the more liberal ministers, William C. Gannett, H. H. Stebbins, W. A. Stewart, and Rabbi Max Landsberg among others, rallied to the cause, but little was accomplished. A renewed effort was made in 1901, this time to organize a Federation of Churches. Professor Rauschenbusch served on the committee which drew up a charter, but the committee's decision to omit the word "evangelical," in order to bring in the Unitarians and the Jews, produced a revolt on the right led by the Methodists who refused to join such a body. Dr. Gannett and Rabbi Landsberg offered to withdraw, but tempers had risen to such a point that nothing could be



accomplished. Ultimately a Ministerial Association was formed in 1903, admitting only those who met the evangelical test.

The most recently established organ of evangelism, the Salvation Army, was likewise a vigorous practitioner of social Christianity. The Salvation Army, after a faltering start in Rochester in the eighties had frequently held encampments on Cobbs Hill during the nineties and was now winning popular acceptance because of its charity work at Christmas and its earnest effectiveness among the poor at other times as well. Its excursions for poor children to the parks and its industrial home for homeless and destitute men seemed to many a more practical application of Christianity than most of the traditional churches could show. Professor Rauschenbusch, who had been keenly interested in the Army's work in the slums of London several years before, must have followed its progress in Rochester and that of the closely related Volunteers of America, who established themselves locally in 1896, with keen interest.

A locally organized service for homeless men, undertaken in 1889 as an inter-denominational venture, the People's Rescue Mission expanded its facilities on Front Street until it was able to lodge over one hundred a night as well as supply simple meals and a wood yard for wholesome and practical exercise. Some of the evangelical pastors were more faithful in supporting this application of practical Christianity because of the religious services conducted at the shelter two or three nights a week. No friend was more devoted than Professor J. H. Gilmore, of the University, formerly a Baptist minister and famed author of the hymn "He Leadeth Me".

There were, of course, many earnest charities some of which relied directly on church support, but the advocates of social Christianity were developing a new view towards charity. They were no longer satisfied merely to give relief or emergency assistance. They may not have formulated a conception of character-building agencies, but their ideal was an institution in which the underprivileged would have an opportunity to develop their potentialities as Christian citizens. The institutional church was one example, and a convenient one, since it could be established by an individual church, still the principal unit of Christian endeavor. But the Y.M.C.A. and Y.W.C.A. were other examples, products of an earlier generation and now firmly established in Rochester as in most other large towns and cities. Still a third category was the social settlement which endeavored to serve an entire



neighborhood, adults as well as young people and children. Generally non-denominational, they were nevertheless religious in the highest social sense and often achieved a better interfaith and interracial participation than any other institution of that day or since.

This movement, like all the others, had its origin in the larger cities, but Rochester contributed one of the pioneers, Lillian D. Wald, founder of Henry Street Settlement in New York, while Myron Adams Jr., formerly of Rochester though not closely related to the beloved pastor of Plymouth Church, likewise entered this field and soon had charge of West Side Settlement House in New York, described in 1906 as the largest social settlement in the world. The first effort to establish a settlement in Rochester was made in 1899 when three young women opened a "Good Will House" on Frank Street, patterned after the college settlement houses in other cities. A day nursery, a boys club and a girls club were quickly organized, but the venture soon disappeared.

The first permanent beginning was made in 1901 when Baden Street Settlement was launched. This was chiefly the work of members of B'rith Kodesh Temple who felt a special responsibility for the welfare of the many German and Polish Jews who were forced by poverty to live in the congested area north of the railroad tracks. Mrs. Robert Stewart, who served for many years as superintendent, soon had a staff of thirty volunteers who conducted classes in sewing, "kitchen gardening," nature study, music and dancing for young girls, carpentry and gymnastics for boys as well as a day nursery for young children and open house in the evenings for adults. Trips to the parks were organized and a vacation camp was opened in 1906. Support was enlisted from the College Women's Club and the Women's Educational and Industrial Union, but most of the active participants and most of the contributions came from the older Jewish families identified with the reform synagogue headed by Rabbi Max Landsberg, long a good friend of Walter Rauschenbusch who must have taken a keen interest in this practical demonstration by Jews of what he called social Christianity.

Another important feature of the religious life of Rochester at this time was the men's Bible class movement. In no other city were there so many or such large and enthusiastic classes as Rochester churches developed. The Presbyterians and Baptists were especially benefited by this movement, but the influence of such classes as the Alling class at

Central Presbyterian, the Hubbell class at First Baptist and the Brotherhood at St. Andrews Episcopal did not stop with their members or the churches but spread out in many directions. Thus the classes supplied rallying points for such causes as the Good Government movement which revitalized the community politically around the turn of the century. Professor Rauschenbusch returned to Rochester at the height of this movement and must have rejoiced over the earnest participation in civic affairs of such leading churchmen as Joseph T. Alling of Central Presbyterian and the Reverend Clarence A. Barbour of Lake Avenue Baptist. Yet, as he recalled the Henry George movement in New York in 1886, he must have regarded the goals of the Good Government forces in Rochester as somewhat limited.

Limited also were the objectives of the temperance advocates who commanded much attention at this time. Again, Rochester had an outstanding prophet in the person of Clinton N. Howard whose Prohibition Union rivaled the Anti-Saloon League in national prominence. The recurrent efforts by Howard and his associates to close the saloons on the Sabbath uncovered much half-hearted law enforcement and influence peddling. Professor Rauschenbusch frequently chided his socialist friends for indifference to temperance, but he could not shrug off their charge that closing the saloons on the Sabbath merely deprived the poor man of his "club" on his one free day. The proponents of social Christianity were challenged to new efforts, as we shall see, by the periodic successes of their temperance friends.

No one, not even Rauschenbusch, could charge the women's clubs of Rochester with limited objectives in these years. The Political Equality Club focused its attention on the suffrage campaign and the College Woman's Club on culture, but it was suffrage and culture for all, rich and poor, and their members supplied leaders for many other causes. Most popular and idealistic in its appeal was the Women's Ethical Club founded in 1889 by Mrs. William C. Gannett. Although this club was not an action group its discussions of social and ethical problems crowded the largest church auditoriums and soon engendered a zeal for more forthright activity, which resulted in 1893 in the organization of the Woman's Educational and Industrial Union patterned on similar Unions in Buffalo and Boston. Its dynamic leader, Mrs. William A. Montgomery, ably assisted by Mrs. Gannett, Mrs. Landsberg, Mrs. Henry F. Danforth and many others, quickly launched a number of enterprises which put the achievements of their

brother advocates of social Christianity to shame. Mrs. Don Alonzo Watson gave her old mansion on Clinton Street as a headquarters house in which a "Noon Rest" for working girls was soon provided. Mrs. Oscar Craig headed a legal aid program, giving free council to poor women; Mrs. Joseph T. Alling started a kindergarten playground in a slum area; Mrs. Lewis Bigelow led in the establishment of an "Opportunity Shop." These and other activities represented a conscious effort to make the city a more wholesome environment for women, but the leaders were not slow to extend the advantages of their measures to men when occasion offered.

Thus, early in 1905 when the temperance advocates uncovered the fact that liquor licenses were being given to houses of ill fame, Mrs. Montgomery called a mass meeting to consider the problem of vice in Rochester. Over six hundred ladies crowded the auditorium in the Y.M.C.A. in response to her call, and after a lively discussion it was resolved that the chair appoint a committee to seek proper negative action from the state excise commission on license applications from dance halls and other houses of entertainment or ill repute. This was expected, but the committee was further directed to petition the city for the opening on Sunday of bathing pools and bowling alleys and even pool rooms under proper supervision so that the poor could find wholesome recreational outlets. The committee of fifteen included most of the ladies mentioned above and among others Mrs. Rauschenbusch and Miss Helen Davis, head of the Rochester Y.W.C.A. and a school-day friend of Walter Rauschenbusch. Their action must have stirred his admiration as it did that of the Reverend Paul Moore Strayer, the recently appointed pastor of Third Presbyterian. The Ministerial Association, however, was horrified by the proposed resort to amusements on the Sabbath. Dr. Strayer's comment, that "the sanctity of man, not the sanctity of the Sabbath, was at stake," was not appreciated by many of his clerical brethren, and soon a heated debate was raging in the pulpit and the press.

Fortunately an early spring diverted attention to summertime activities. More generous support was given to the band concerts in the parks, and the playground movement now gained real headway. The issue was not permitted to die, however, and a Citizen's Committee headed by Joseph T. Alling made plans to continue the band concerts in a downtown hall during the winter. However, the Ministerial Association had formulated a plan of its own for Sunday afternoon

services under the auspices of the Y.M.C.A. in a downtown theater, and early in December it was agreed to let the Y. try out its program for several weeks without competition and to step in with entertainments only in case the meetings failed to attract the right people—those, in other words, whose idleness caused all the trouble. Dossensbach's park band was engaged for the occasion, marching through the downtown streets and into the Lyceum Theater to launch the services with a packed audience on December 17—a good start for a highly successful season.

Professor Rauschenbusch was an occasional speaker at these programs. Moreover, he was an active member of Dr. Strayer's committee which conducted a series of Sunday afternoon meetings for boys in the Y.M.C.A. auditorium that winter, programs which ran simultaneously with the theater programs for men. He had himself headed a Y.M.C.A. committee a year before, set up at the State Y's instigation to survey social conditions in Rochester. The committee, which took nearly a year for its investigation, reported on May 30, 1904, that Rochester was almost free of the racial problems which plagued many other cities, having only 614 Negroes and Asiatics combined, in a total of 170,000 residents. However, as a fourth of the total were foreign born and more than half of the remainder were children of foreign born parents, the city faced a very real problem of assimilation. The rich cultural heritage of these many newcomers could, the committee believed, be integrated with that of the older native stock through a proper exercise of sympathy and intelligence.

The physical accommodations in Rochester were deficient, the committee reported, since there were only 29,531 dwellings for 33,964 families. Less than half of the 26,174 single houses were owner occupied, and while this was better than in most other cities, the trend was down and, together with the simultaneously upward trend of overcrowding, foreshadowed serious problems in the future. The committee found a major cause for this situation in the low level of prevailing wages. Thus, while the 14,157 engaged in trade and transport averaged \$1004 a year, the 25,315 employed in manufacturing averaged less than half as much, only \$498 a year for men and \$267 for women. Evidence that many were discouraged by these conditions from marrying was found in the census statistics for 1900, which showed that 29 per cent of the men between the ages of twenty-five and forty-four were unmarried and 28 per cent of the women. While

the few known houses of ill fame were clustered on one street and subjected to frequent punitive raids, evidence of an increasing practice of semi-professional prostitution was uncovered by the committee which blamed it on the low wages of working girls, the large proportion of unmarried men, and the convenient facilities afforded by the eighty-eight "hotels" in Rochester, less than a fourth of which really served as hotels. Moreover, as nearly a third of the males of Rochester were boys under fifteen years of age, extensive playgrounds and swimming pools were needed for their use.

Professor Rauschenbusch and his committee, including, among others, Paul Moore Strayer and Frederick S. Starrett, general secretary of the Y.M.C.A., made twelve broad recommendations: Rochester had a special obligation to its new immigrants—Italians, Slavs and Jews; measures were needed to counteract the trend towards congestion in certain areas; child labor laws should be scrupulously enforced; legitimate outlets for youthful energies were needed to prevent juvenile lawlessness; proper sex education should be provided for boys and girls; industrial wages should be increased in order to help make marriage easier and check illicit sexual activity; opportunities to enjoy nature and take part in intellectual and aesthetic activities should be increased; a moral and scientific campaign should be pressed against gambling and the liquor evil; and, finally, the spiritual force of religion should be conserved and strengthened.

These recommendations obviously called for municipal action as well as for a wide variety of institutional efforts. We have seen that the Woman's Educational and Industrial Union as well as the two Y's became actively interested in some of these problems in 1905, but meanwhile Professor Rauschenbusch was determined to do his part, too. He still attended the annual gatherings of the Brotherhood of the Kingdom at Marlboro-on-the-Hudson, and this earnest fellowship, which he had helped to found in 1892, provided a suggestive pattern for work in Rochester. A local branch was accordingly organized in 1904, drawing together the ministers and laymen who were most actively interested in social Christianity. It was an informal group of men who volunteered to give a share of their time to the cause. Among those who participated were, in addition to Rauschenbusch and Strayer, the Reverend F. C. A. Jones, Professor Louis Kaiser, Joseph T. Alling, Joseph B. Bloss, George P. Decker, A. P. Fletcher, William A. Montgomery, William Pidgeon, and Herbert S. Weet among several others.

Each responded to frequent calls for speeches before Bible classes, prayer meetings and other organizations ready to hear a talk on the application of Christian principles to social conditions. Annual conferences of the local chapter of the Brotherhood of the Kingdom featured speakers from the national Brotherhood, such as Dr. Josiah Strong of New York in 1905, and welcomed to an open meeting "All who believe in a purer, deeper and freer spiritual life; in the unity of Christian men; in the brotherhood of nations under the leadership of Jesus Christ; in the reconstruction of political and social life according to the principles of Christian brotherhood; and in the application of the religious spirit to the regeneration of all human relations. . . ."

There was, in fact, only one aspect of the social and religious life of the period which Rauschenbusch neglected. It was not an oversight on his part, however, for Professor Rauschenbusch was not ready to engage in the controversies over doctrine which troubled so many students of natural sciences. He refused to be diverted into such disputations, possibly because of the troubles they had brought to two of his early associates in the Brotherhood of the Kingdom in New York, but more probably because he had a more pressing concern for the social gospel. His temperament and background were different from those of William T. Brown and Algernon Crapsey, the two men in Rochester who faced these questions head on. Indeed the protracted trial of "The Last of the Heretics," as Crapsey styled himself, must have made Rauschenbusch even more determined to avoid a similar frustration of his own efforts.

Dr. Crapsey's career provides an instructive parallel to that of Professor Rauschenbusch. He, too, had received his inspiration in the slums of New York and had come to Rochester full of generous sympathy for the unfortunate and a conviction that the church had a responsibility to serve the poor. He had made his parish at St. Andrews Episcopal Church a haven for the oppressed. He had organized there a Brotherhood which enrolled many non-churchmen and carried on many activities of great use in the community, notably a school of practical knowledge which opened rooms in a building near the church in 1893. He had a fluent style and an effective delivery as well as an inquiring mind, and in 1904 this combination of talents prompted him to deliver a series of "lecture-sermons" which stirred one of Rochester's most sensational religious controversies.

The Crapsey lectures dealt chiefly with the relation of religion to

the state down through the ages. With sweeping strokes he sketched the history of these relationships from the time of Christ down to the Rochester of his day. The tenth lecture brought him to a condemnation of the contemporary commercialization of both the church and the state—a line of reasoning that reminds one of the Rauschenbusch lecture before the Labor Lyceum a few years before. The next lecture attacked contemporary churchmen on still another ground—their failure to bring their interpretation of the scriptures into harmony with their scientific knowledge. This had often been said in a general way, but Dr. Crapsey pressed the point home by suggesting the incredibility of the virgin birth. Many in Rochester had been following this series in the *Herald's* Monday edition with interest and pleasure, but this lecture brought an immediate reaction. Several ministers attacked the doctrine from their pulpits the next Sunday, and Dr. Crapsey's final lecture-sermon on the social gospel went almost unnoticed.

The long drawn out trial of Dr. Crapsey, which was reluctantly undertaken by Bishop William D. Walker of Buffalo and pressed to a decision at Batavia in May 1906, must have struck Rauschenbusch as a sad misapplication of religious energies. Dr. Crapsey published his lectures in book form, under the title *Religion and Politics*, and the heated discussions it inevitably aroused over what Rauschenbusch regarded as a side issue may have spurred him to renew his own efforts to write a book on the social gospel. In any event it was in the midst of the Crapsey trial, and during the controversy over the granting of liquor licenses to houses of amusement, and while the reformers were still undecided as to the best method to reach the workingman and to fill his Sabbath with wholesome activity that Rauschenbusch wrote his first great book.

### Christianity and The Social Crisis

Rauschenbusch, like Crapsey, began with a backward glance at the early Christians, but, although a church historian himself, he could not spare much space to history. He hastened over the Catholic and Reformation ages to devote his major attention to the contemporary world, which he saw in a state of crisis. He saw materialism and commercialism strangling man's spirit and leading him into a ferocious struggle for wealth and power in which the interests of the ignorant and the weak were sacrificed. He saw the fate of the church tied up with the welfare of the laboring classes, and he saw in Christian



socialism, as distinguished from its materialistic rival, a hope for a new reformation of the social order. Social salvation will be achieved, he argued, when men become more concerned for a realization of the Kingdom of God on earth than for the after life of their individual souls. The first requirements were "repentance from our social sins, faith in the possibility of a new social order." He called for a new type of social evangelism, examples of which he was glad to point out: "The social work of the Y.M.C.A. and Y.W.C.A., of the Salvation Army and the Volunteers of America, of the social settlements and institutional churches, show what is coming."\*

Shortly after completing his book Rauschenbusch sailed to Europe for a year's study chiefly in the field of church history. It was his fifth trip and enabled him to renew old and develop new friendships at the universities in England and on the Continent. He was welcomed as a mature scholar who, moreover, had something to say. And when he returned in the summer of 1908 he found that he had become famous in America, too. An invitation to address a large gathering of church leaders in New York City greeted him as he disembarked, and amidst numerous other calls for lectures an attractive offer to teach at the Pacific School of Religion arrived. Rauschenbusch did shoulder a heavy burden of lectures in the years ahead, entailing long journeys across the country, but he made Rochester his headquarters and continued to hold and fill his professorship at the Seminary until his death in 1918.

A big job awaited him at home, not only at the Rochester Theological Seminary but in the city itself. Many significant developments in the field of social Christianity had occurred during his absence and new movements awaited his cooperation.

The most dramatic developments had centered around Dr. Crapsey though he was by no means responsible for all of them. Many of the warm supporters he had won in Rochester remained faithful after his conviction. When his rectorship at St. Andrews was finally terminated by the bishop in December 1906, fifty citizens signed a request for a series of lectures, and manager M. E. Wolff of the Lyceum Theater opened the theater to his use for four Sunday evenings in January. The large and increasing crowds which responded encouraged Dr. Crapsey and his backers to plan the organization of a new Brotherhood, enroll-

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\* Rauschenbusch, Walter, *Christianity and the Social Crisis*, pp. 349, 354.

ing members on a non-sectarian basis to sponsor a series of Sunday evening services in the theater and maintain a settlement in the slum area. While these plans were being perfected under the presidency of J. Warrant Castleman (formerly of Plymouth Church), Dr. Crapsey made a hurried trip to Europe to attend the Hague Peace Congress. He was back in August ready to take up the work of the Brotherhood. The Sunday evening lecture series opened at the Lyceum on October 7, 1907, with a lecture on "The New Theology in England and Its Relation to the Social and Political Life of the Country." Crowds filled the main floor of the theater and spilled over into the balcony for many of his thirty lectures that winter on various aspects of the social and intellectual crisis facing the church in the contemporary world.

Meanwhile the Ministerial Association had likewise been busy, undertaking two far-reaching projects. A church census, made under the chairmanship of the Reverend H. H. Stebbins in April 1906 with the aid of 1100 volunteer canvassers, had found many thousands who listed a Protestant preference but had no active church affiliation. Only one professed atheist was encountered and only 1699 families who claimed no church preference, out of 38,747 tabulated, 14,177 of whom were Catholic and 1,138 Jewish. The Ministerial Association determined to launch a series of revival services in which all evangelical churches would cooperate. Dr. J. Wilbur Chapman and his corps of evangelists were brought to Rochester in November for an eighteen-day campaign. An estimated 200,000 attended the two hundred scheduled meetings in churches, theaters, even saloons, with promising results in new members reported by most pastors.

The revival, however, had the unfortunate result of stirring the Reverend George C. Richmond into outspoken activity. After listening to one of the evangelists condemn the influences of the theater, Richmond had attended the current performance at the Lyceum and advised his parishioners the next Sunday that they would get more good from the theater than from the revival services. The prompt reaction of other ministers gave Richmond a prominence which he continued to exploit for the next year and half. The causes he espoused in that time were legion, but unfortunately all suffered from his support. Thus the invective with which he attacked Bishop Walker, in tardy defense of Dr. Crapsey, greatly embarrassed the latter's cause; and similarly the good words he said for Sunday amusements and other matters of interest to the proponents of social Christianity proved in the end to

be a greater injury than a help. Even the press was relieved when Richmond was finally eased out of his sinking parish and sped on his way to Philadelphia where he stirred up a similar controversy with his new bishop a few years later

Among those directly attacked by Richmond was Clinton N. Howard who was able under such persecution to rally enough support to close not only the saloons on the Sabbath but the motion pictures, too. The Reverend Paul Moore Strayer and others interested more in positive than in negative action persuaded the Ministerial Association to invite other agencies to join in a study of the city's need for wholesome Sunday activities. Dr. Strayer, as chairman of the resulting committee, secured its support, including that of its labor members, for a resolution favoring Sunday afternoon band concerts throughout the year and a wider use of school buildings for community functions. The Sunday programs of the Y.M.C.A. for boys and for men were both again in operation, but the several hundred attracted to each of these programs seemed insignificant in view of the increased needs. The first winter series of Sunday afternoon band concerts was inaugurated in Convention Hall in December 1908. The free use of school buildings for community activities was greatly extended.

The social center movement was the one aspect of the broader movement for social betterment for which Rochester gained national credit. The idea of opening school buildings to neighborhood use had been proposed by Jacob Riis of New York in a talk at B'rith Kodesh in 1901. It had attracted the support of Mrs. Montgomery on the school board and Miss Alida Lattimore, active on the Playground League. Soon the Woman's Educational and Industrial Union, the Central Trades Council, Baden Street Settlement and other organizations were backing a campaign, led by J. Howard Bradstreet, president of the Children's Playground League, to persuade the Board of Education to open the schools for community activities. A Social Betterment Association was formed spontaneously at Number 27 School in February 1907, and Dr. Barbour headed the list of speakers chosen to address its Monday evening meetings. It did not take long for Professor George M. Forbes, president of the school board, to see the merits of the proposal, and \$5000 was made available for extra-curricular programs at Number 9 School, in the heart of the foreign section, where the first social center was opened experimentally in April 1907. Edward J. Ward, a former student of Rauschenbusch at

the Theological Seminary with experience as playground director in Buffalo, was brought to Rochester in June to become superintendent of playgrounds and director of social center activities.

The social center movement provided the most effective answer to the needs cited in the Rauschenbusch survey of 1904. The adult civic clubs, the women's clubs, girls clubs and boys clubs, which took turns at school facilities on different evenings, afforded new social opportunities to the crowded neighborhoods around schools Number 9, 14, 26, West High and several others. A League of Civic Clubs was formed in February 1909, and the lecture and discussion programs fanned out into all sections of the city. New leaders were drawn into the work, notably Professor Kendrick P. Shedd of the University, Herbert S. Weet, principal of West High, and Judge John B. M. Stephens. The city council gave the school board over \$10,000 for this program in 1909.

Nevertheless, doubts concerning the program's merits were already becoming vocal. The discussions staged by the civic clubs ranged over a wide area, but those dealing with social questions proved most frequent and the more radical speakers always got the headlines. Attacks on the city government and its Republican boss tried the mayor's patience, but the incident which brought the first official check was related to religion, not politics. The incident grew out of a masquerade dance held by the older girls club of the social center of Number 9 School. It was a Jewish district and the girls regularly met on Sunday rather than Saturday, their Sabbath. Much to their surprise, the picture which the press carried on this occasion, showing the girls dancing in varied costumes, some in men's attire, on Sunday in a public school, shocked many citizens. Several Catholic and Protestant clergymen protested, and critics of the movement rushed in from all sides. The mayor seized the occasion to cut the budget, though the program was retained in reduced form for another year partly because a convention of social workers had scheduled a visit to Rochester to honor the city for its pioneer work in this field. Governor Hughes and many other distinguished visitors lauded the social centers for their contributions to social and political life. Unfortunately the rising tide of socialist opinion seemed to dominate these forums, supported at public expense, and when Professor Shedd described the red flag as the most universal symbol of the working man, popular indignation and official wrath overflowed. A ban was announced by the mayor against further

speeches by Shedd in public halls, and the funds intended for the social centers were diverted to the playground movement.

The social centers were closely related in function to the neighborhood settlements and institutional churches. Their closing required renewed activity from these agencies and the formation of new youth groups as well. The churches were in fact expanding their services. The facilities available to the Boys Evening Home had been greatly extended with the enlargement of Gannett House in 1910; Brick Church Institute was rebuilt on a magnificent scale in the same year. Other churches were experimenting with boys clubs, and young peoples societies, such as the Christian Endeavor and Epworth League, were winning wide acceptance. The annual Children's Day Sunday had gained general adoption by 1907, and the new Boy Scout movement entered Rochester in 1910. Indeed the earnest efforts of Henry W. Morgan and Colonel S. P. Moulthrop won Rochester an early prominence in the Scout movement.

The more traditional neighborhood settlement idea was likewise gaining a firmer hold in Rochester. Baden Street Settlement was expanding its services. A free dispensary was opened there in 1907 and staffed by volunteer nurses and doctors; a physical culture program, a vacation school and a vacation camp were provided, and in 1910 the house next door was acquired to permit further expansion. A trained nurse was engaged the next year as the second full-time employee in a staff that included sixty volunteers. A new settlement, projected by a group of nurses who carried on a visiting service without a house in 1906, soon disappeared, but a second permanent settlement did grow out of a Model Housekeeping Center opened the following year in the Italian section. Mrs. Gannett, Mrs. Montgomery, Mrs. Crapsey and Miss Helen Rochester Rogers provided community backing for this venture which was conducted for many years by Miss Florence Cross, a Rochester girl who had learned Italian while studying art in Rome. Miss Cross provided friendly counsel to the many Italian women who dropped in to see how she kept house, at first on Davis Street and after 1911 on Lewis Street. With the assistance of volunteers from Mechanics Institute practical classes were organized for the children and English classes for adults. Miss Cross was quick to defend her Italian friends from public attack, protested effectively against the prevailing method of reporting Italian crimes in the press, and gladly sponsored the performance of an old Sicilian Passion Play by a local

group of Italian artists in 1908. She well earned the shower given by appreciative neighbors when she married Richard Kitchelt in June 1911.

Of course both Catholics and Protestants endeavored to provide for their Italian co-religionists. The Catholics had the larger responsibility and through the leadership of the Reverend Edward J. Hanna, Professor at St. Bernard's Seminary and special assistant to the bishop, two Italian Catholic churches were organized. Dr. Hanna, a boyhood friend of Rauschenbusch as noted above, had mastered several Italian dialects while studying in Rome and never tired of visiting Italian work camps about Rochester, of addressing their religious societies and hearing their confessions. The First Methodist Church also provided a mission service in Italian in 1901 and maintained it successfully at first in its own chapel and after 1906 in separate quarters on Portland Avenue where it finally grew into the independent North Avenue Methodist Church in 1913. A separate Italian Y.M.C.A. was opened on Hebard Street in 1911, providing an additional center for classes in English and practical subjects, including citizenship. The formation of a local branch of the North American Civic League that year supplied still another cooperative agency which in this case maintained an employment bureau, a library of Italian and Polish books, and a series of talks in these languages on public and private hygiene and other practical matters.

These activities were local manifestations of the awakening social consciousness which Professor Rauschenbusch was to discuss in his second book in this field, *Christianizing The Social Order*, published in 1912. He rejoiced to see the increasing evidences of social Christianity in Rochester and elsewhere, but he saw also the formidable tasks that remained, for the major economic forces seemed to be bent on a ruthless course. He was, however, ever ready to pit the spiritual power of the social gospel against the materialism of either capitalism or socialism. His little volume of *Prayers of the Social Awakening*, first published in 1909, had given effective expression to this faith. He still confidently hoped to see the issue resolved in the minds and hearts of the rising labor forces. This spirit and these convictions help to explain the time and effort he gave to the People's Sunday Evening programs, which, in turn, helped to give a workingman's flavor to the style and logic of his book.

The People's Sunday Evening was, however, primarily the work of the Reverend Paul Moore Strayer. Dr. Strayer's devotion to social

Christianity was evident from his first sermon at Third Presbyterian Church in 1903, when he admonished his new parishioners that "the work we must do lies principally outside, not within the church." Several of his early activities have already been noted here, but perhaps the action which best symbolized his position in Rochester was his participation in the affairs of the Central Trades and Labor Council as a delegate of the Ministerial Association. He was not the first such delegate in American cities, nor even the first in Rochester, for the Reverend E. P. Hubbell of Cornhill Methodist Church had served in this capacity in 1905; but Strayer held the post for many years after his appointment in 1907, attending the regular meetings, sometimes participating in the discussions, but generally content to sit quietly on the side smoking his pipe, a respectful observer. He won respect in return, and his brief contributions, "Brother Strayer's Corner," appeared as a regular feature in the weekly *Labor Journal* for many years. He showed up annually to march as the ministerial representative in the Labor Day parades and often appeared on the platform at a strike rally as a guarantee of civic responsibility.

When in 1908 Dr. Strayer announced his plan for a Sunday evening program for non-churchgoing members of the working class, everybody recognized his sincerity. He had secured the cooperation of Professor Rauschenbusch and Dr. H. H. Stebbins as well as a year's lease for Sunday evenings at the National Theater. They did not intend to compete, Dr. Strayer declared, either with the Y. programs, which were chiefly evangelistical in character, or with Dr. Crapsey's Brotherhood programs which dealt primarily with philosophical history and the evolution of Christianity. The People's Sunday Evenings would feature choral singing by his Third Church choir and simple talks on the teachings of Jesus Christ about the Kingdom and its relation to the contemporary problems and needs of man.

A committee of fifteen laymen was named to direct the program and help the church meet the additional expense. Both businessmen and labor leaders were included, thus bringing several new men into the field of social religion, notably Henry T. Noyes who served for many years as treasurer. Frank Keough, a labor representative, cooperated with Dr. Strayer in setting up a labor bureau which stirred such a wide concern over unemployment that, as often happens, a chain of events was started which led to the organization of the United Charities in 1910. The first annual report of its director, Dr. William



Kirk, showed the participation in this predecessor of the Council of Social Agencies not only of 39 agencies but 40 churches, thus revealing its continued relation to the movement for social Christianity.

Meanwhile the twenty public services held during the first year were so well attended that the People's Sunday Evening moved the next November into the larger Cook's Opera House and moved again the next year into the new Schubert Theater. Occasionally an outside speaker, such as Lincoln Steffens, or a local representative of labor, such as Richard Kitchelt, was invited to the platform, but generally either Dr. Strayer or Professor Rauschenbusch gave the main talk, welcoming questions and discussion from the floor at its close.

The People's Sunday Evenings proved to be the most enduring of the non-secular religious programs in Rochester. The Y's Sunday programs were discontinued after the fourth year, and the theater Lent services conducted by the Reverend William R. Taylor of Brick Church were abandoned after the third season. Dr. Crapsey's Brotherhood meetings in the Lyceum Theater continued for seven years, but his shift from philosophy to social problems, marked from the start, brought him to a point in 1912 where, as he confessed, he could preach nothing but the gospel of socialism. The social welfare activities of his Brotherhood, which had included the manufacture and repair and distribution of clothing as well as the Vacant Lot Gardening program so vigorously pressed in the years 1909 to 1912, began to seem less important. Dr. Crapsey became an official organizer of the Socialist party during the crucial election year of 1912 though he was never quite satisfied with the materialistic philosophy. The Brotherhood moved in its seventh year to the Victoria Theater where it completed the season despite the fact that the sessions became increasingly tense as the views of Dr. Crapsey and many of the discussants shifted to the left. The effort was abandoned in the fall of 1913, when Dr. Crapsey was appointed State parole officer for the Western House of Correction at Industry, and the People's Sunday Evening was left to carry on alone for its last three seasons.

Dr. Strayer and Professor Rauschenbusch were, in contrast, making renewed efforts to rally the forces of social Christianity. One of the projects they supported in these years was the Men and Religion Forward Movement, though it proved less enduring in Rochester than the local branch of the Brotherhood of the Kingdom which continued to hold occasional meetings, enlisting the energies of new members, such

as Dr. William Kirk of United Charities, Levi S. Richards, editor of the *Times*, and Dr. Conrad Moehlman of the Theological Seminary. A much more influential and enduring institution was launched with the formation of the City Club, which Dr. Strayer served as president during the early formative years and which preserved for several seasons more the imprint of his spirit and the motivation of the social gospel.

Indeed, many of the laymen early imbued with the zeal of the social gospel were continuing to display its influence as they assumed leadership in broader civic enterprises. Henry T. Noyes as champion of civic improvements, Edward G. Miner in the work of United Charities, Herbert S. Weet as Superintendent of Schools, John B. M. Stephens as Children's Court Judge were a few of the more successful. The more radical members and their labor friends enjoyed no such triumphs, however, and Ward, Rumball, the Kitchelts, Shedd and the Reverend F. C. A. Jones all left Rochester to continue their careers with more or less success elsewhere. Their departure, however, was ominous for Rochester, for the social and economic issues which the two sides had discussed for several years under the inspiration of the social gospel had not been resolved and could not be tackled only from one side.

The development was not due to any loss of nerve, but to a failing or rather a shortage of the spirit of brotherhood which the social gospel taught. The economic crisis was in fact worsening more rapidly than remedies could be found. A series of strikes occurred developing a feeling of bitterness which hardened many hearts and many convictions on both sides. Some supporters of social Christianity fell off to the right, some to the left. Thus when the Labor Lyceum was finally expelled from the Common Council room, after Professor Shedd defied the mayor's ban and addressed them there in 1911, a separate hall was erected on St. Paul Street, but the Lyceum in its new and more isolated setting became increasingly doctrinaire in its views and limited in its influence, finally realizing the fate Rauschenbusch had predicted of its course in 1901.

The crisis which faced the advocates of social Christianity in Rochester was perhaps most dramatically revealed in the fate of still another hopeful effort. Baden Street Settlement had launched, in 1907, a staff leaflet known as *The Bulletin*, which developed so much interest that its publisher, Elmer Adler, joined with the Reverend Edwin A. Rumball, Gannett's successor at First Unitarian, to expand it into a

monthly journal of 32 or more pages devoted to civic reform. *The Common Good*, as it was now renamed, quickly became a useful organ for the presentation of melioristic studies of local problems, including a careful survey of the Fourth Ward's needs, frequent consideration of immigrant problems, and a forthright analysis of the plight of women workers in Rochester. Unfortunately, this last article was sent to press just before the sudden outbreak of a two-month's strike in the dominant clothing industry and came out in February 1913 just as a tragic burst of violence resulted in the death of a woman striker and created a surge of bitterness on both sides. The number of advertisers dropped off sharply, and although *The Common Good* carried on with reduced size for another twenty months, it was finally suspended in September 1914.

The Woman's Educational and Industrial Union likewise encountered difficulties from which it emerged with reduced effectiveness. Its leaders had taken the initiative in inviting the Reverend Mrs. Caroline Bartlett Crane to Rochester in 1911 to make a sanitary survey of the city. Mrs. Crane's conception of sanitation was by no means limited to health matters, however, and, imbued with a zeal for social Christianity herself, she prodded many aspects of the community's life and came up with some surprising discoveries. Whereas many of her sponsors and all of the officials who welcomed her with open arms expected to hear a commendation of Rochester's fine attributes, her report stressed chiefly the limitations, such as unsanitary garbage collection, imperfect street cleaning, no meat inspection, poor lighting and bad fire precautions in many schools, unsanitary tenements and boarding houses, and the evident threat of slum developments in several areas. Mrs. Gannett, Mrs. Alling, and Dr. Goler, her chief defenders, valiantly protested the loud outcry in the press against her criticisms, pointing to the words of praise she had included for other features, but the indignation of most Rochesterians was so great that few constructive values could be salvaged.

Similarly, the good effects of an elaborate Child Welfare Exhibit, staged by the Union in conjunction with several other agencies in 1913, were considerably reduced by the furor which developed over the small cubicle in which some aspects of sex hygiene were displayed. The Union saw its legal aid program successfully established on an independent basis, its opportunity shop functioning in a useful way, and

many of its other fruitful ideas adopted by proper agencies, but its own creative vitality was beginning to flag. Mrs. Montgomery was spending much of her time in journeys far afield for the National Federation of Church Women while Mrs. Gannett and several of the others were concentrating most of their energies on the suffrage campaign.

Thus Dr. Strayer and Professor Rauschenbusch faced the sharper problems of the pre-war years with diminishing forces. Dr. Strayer had the assistance of the Reverend E. A. Rumball in his efforts to moderate the outbursts of hostility which marked the clothing strike in 1913, and the two together helped to prepare the way for mediation and compromise if not a final settlement of basic difficulties. The People's Sunday Evenings continued throughout this crisis, and stood up manfully to such issues as Sunday baseball the next year, when Dr. Strayer defended amateur games in face of the opposition of most of his fellow clergymen. But a large part of the audience left the hall on one occasion in 1914, incensed at a statement by the guest speaker, the venerable Washington Gladden. The issue, curiously enough, was not socialism (which the People's Sunday Evenings had learned to take with equanimity, even in strong doses as delivered by John Spargo, an occasional visitor) but the question of whether liberals could work with Catholics. However, the demonstration was obviously planned by a group of bigots who came to this particular meeting prepared to protest an expected statement honoring Catholic liberals, and the People's Sunday Evening easily survived such displays. It was not so easy to surmount the new issues raised by the outbreak of war in Europe that year, bringing a new division between pacifists, or near pacifists, such as Strayer and Rauschenbusch, and humanitarian interventionists indignant at the treatment of Belgium. Joseph T. Alling was an outspoken leader of the latter group, with whom Crapsey alligned himself, thus breaking with the Socialist party which was officially anti-war. The explosive possibilities of the discussion period increased as the conflict spread. Finally, in the spring of 1916, the Committee of Fifteen determined to bring the program to an end at the close of its eighth season.

The cause of the social gospel was by no means abandoned, however. Dr. Strayer found time at last to write his long contemplated volume on *The Reconstruction of The Church*, which was widely and favorably received throughout the country. Dr. Crapsey brought out a book on *The Rise of the Working Class*, an analytical study with a religious slant. Walter Rauschenbusch produced two significant books, *The*

*Social Principles of Jesus* in 1916 and *A Theology for The Social Gospel* in 1917.

In writing his last book Professor Rauschenbusch made a final effort to commit Christians to the social gospel. It was no longer necessary, he felt, to urge the need, argue the point of view, or describe the techniques, for the social gospel had already become orthodox. Indeed, he might have cited the instance of a Rochester pastor who, when dismissed from his church, declared that the only complaint was his failure to preach the social gospel. Yet the social gospel, as Rauschenbusch knew, was not as secure as this incident would suggest, for the results were as yet unimpressive. The institutional church, the social settlement, and the many other conscientious efforts had by no means solved the economic and social crises, which had, instead, advanced to such a point as to disrupt even the close fellowship of his local Brotherhood of the Kingdom. Rauschenbusch, however, was no more of an optimist than he was a millenarian; nor was he even remotely a pessimist. Rather he was a man of sufficient faith to have hope—faith in the religious power of man, hope for his social redemption. What was needed, he declared, was a theology which would advance beyond the old doctrine of the sin of Adam's fall and of individual men to encourage a recognition of and repentance for the sins of society. The good works of social Christianity could thus become so meaningful to individuals and groups that they would go forward with the social gospel to a progressive triumph over the materialism of both capitalism and socialism and over the bigotry of creeds and nations as well.

Walter Rauschenbusch died a few months after the publication of his last book, but his writings and his influence lived on. In theological schools and pulpits all over the land his interpretation of a widespread movement has had its effect. The next generations did display a greater sense of social responsibility for human welfare, a broader sense of the need for a world wide brotherhood of men. These ends have not yet been realized but the place of Professor Rauschenbusch as a prophet in a major trend of modern times is secure. As a representative of significant efforts in this direction in the Rochester of his day, he should not be without honor here, too.

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